

**Pollinator Habitat Enhancement Plan
Practice Activity Code (146) (No.)**

1. Definition

A pollinator habitat enhancement plan is a site-specific plan developed for a client that addresses the improvement, restoration, enhancement, or expansion of flower-rich habitat that supports native and/or managed pollinators.

The pollinator habitat enhancement plan will:

- a. Meet NRCS quality criteria plant condition, wildlife (pollinators).
- b. Comply with federal, state, tribal, and local laws, regulations, and permit requirements.
- c. Meet the client's objectives.

2. Pollinator Habitat Enhancement Plan Technical Criteria

This section establishes the minimum criteria to be addressed in the development of Pollinator Habitat Enhancement Plans.

A. General Criteria: A Pollinator Habitat Enhancement Plan shall be developed by certified Technical Service Providers (TSPs). In accordance with Section 1240 (A), the Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) program provides funding support through contracts with eligible producers to obtain services of certified TSPs for development of Pollinator Habitat Enhancement Plans. The specific TSP criteria required for Pollinator Habitat Enhancement Plan development is located on the TSP registry (TechReg) web site at:

<http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/programs/technical/tsp>

B. Background and site information

- Landowner information – name, address, operation, size
- Location and plan map of parcel

C. Identify Client Objectives such as:

1. Improve pollination service provided by wild (unmanaged) bees by:
 - a. Increasing floral diversity and ensuring continuous and diverse bloom,
 - b. Increasing undisturbed habitat/ground (including the creation of alkali or other ground-nesting bee beds),
 - c. Increasing nesting opportunities for tunnel-nesting bees, and
 - d. Providing pollinator refugia.
2. Improve pollination service provided by managed bees by:
 - a. Increasing floral diversity and ensuring continuous and diverse bloom,
 - b. Providing readily accessible clean water
3. Increase diversity and availability of butterfly host plants.
4. Increase abundance of beneficial insects important for pest management.
5. Improve cost efficiency (e.g. removal of marginal crop land from production and/or improvement of produce quality from enhanced pollination).

Conservation Systems are reviewed periodically, and updated if needed. To obtain the current version of this system, contact your Natural Resources Conservation Service State Office, or visit the Field Office Technical Guide.

6. Maintain or improve wildlife habitat.
7. Beautify the landscape.
8. Provide pollinator populations with refuge from pesticides.
9. Change or adjust pesticide use to reduce hazards for pollinator populations.

D. Identify/Document Existing Conditions

1. Create the conservation plan map including field boundaries, streams, surface waters, wetlands, fences, and land uses.
2. Acquire a soils map and appropriate soil descriptions for the land use and resource concerns.
3. Identify the number of acres available.
4. Use an appropriate habitat assessment, evaluation, or Habitat Suitability Index model and (when available) the Ecological Site Description to define the existing conditions for wildlife.
5. Document the existing management practices and activities on cropped and non-cropped portions of the property.

E. Document the Desired Future Conditions/Goals

1. Develop the plant species composition plan that will benefit a diverse pollinator community (i.e., at least 12 species of flowering plants, three of which are in bloom at any one time during the early, mid, and late periods of the growing season.
Note: if the planting is designed to support adjacent insect-pollinated agriculture, then:
 - a. Minimize bloom competition with insect-pollinated crops, and
 - b. Take care to avoid plants that may serve as crop pest or disease hosts.
2. Design for the minimal weed competition, but the inclusion, where appropriate, of beneficial “weeds” (e.g., milkweed as Monarch butterfly host plants).
3. Where appropriate, identify areas of undisturbed pollinator habitat e.g.,
 - a. No till areas appropriate for ground-nesting bees
 - b. Overgrown bunch grasses for bumble bee nest sites
 - c. Host plants for butterflies
 - d. Tree cavities, standing dead trees, exfoliating bark (e.g., in riparian or adjacent land) for wood-nesting bees
4. Document the following:
 - a. The estimated dates of first flowering for each of the pollinator-friendly forage plant species.
 - b. Identify the expected pollinators and time-frame (date range) of visits.
 - c. Expected ground-nesting and wood-nesting bee activity, if appropriate.
 - d. If providing crop pollination services, record the crops to be pollinated.

5. Monitoring Plan - Identify specific dates and data to be recorded.
6. Operation & Maintenance activities for the planned practices.
7. Identify adequate clean water source(s) for honey bees

F. Pollinator Habitat Enhancement Planning Documentation

1. Practice plan map –scale, north arrow, planned and existing boundaries, fields, land use, appropriate map symbols, and, where available, the identification of ecological sites by field.
2. Soils map – legend, appropriate interpretations, and, where available, the ecological site descriptions
3. Resource Concerns addressed by the planned practices.
4. Contingency plans for harsh winter conditions, drought, fire, flooding, and other extraordinary events
5. Conservation Practice Plans and Specifications (Implementation Requirements) for the planned practices – these may be found in the respective state’s Electronic Field Office Technical Guide https://efotg.sc.egov.usda.gov/efotg_locator.aspx . Where an Implementation Requirements document is not available an MSWord document may be used to record the needed plans and specifications as shown in the respective Conservation Practice Standard.

Typical Conservation Practices for Pollinators may include:

Code	Practice Name
327	Conservation Cover
340	Cover Crop
342	Critical Area Planting
386	Field Border
390	Riparian Herbaceous Cover
391	Riparian Forest Buffer
393	Filter Strip
422	Hedgerow Planting
645	Upland Wildlife Habitat Management

G. Deliverables for the Client – a hardcopy of the plan that includes:

1. Cover page – name, address, phone of client and TSP; Total Acres of the Plan, signature blocks for the TSP, producer, and a signature block for the NRCS acceptance.
2. Soils map and appropriate soil descriptions
3. Resource assessment results for pollinators
4. Conservation Practice Standard site specific Plans and Specification – can be documented in the respective Conservation Practice Implementation Requirement

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or in a MsWord document covering the items outline in the Conservation Practice Standard “Plans and Specifications”.

H. Deliverables for NRCS Field Office:

1. Complete Hardcopy and Electronic copy of the client’s plan (MsWord copy) and other applicable digital support documents.
2. Digital Conservation Plan Map with fields, features, and structural practices located.
3. Digital Soils Map.